

Inside Poverty

by Bret Griffin

Age 8

Extreme poverty

Extreme poverty is where you don't earn enough to buy basic things like food, clothes and heating. Relative poverty is where you can't afford things average people can – so this could include books, toys and presents. You think it's a joke, don't you? Well, there are families that have to live like that!

In November this year, it is the 75th anniversary of the Beveridge report - the (slightly) lifesaving founding document of the UK welfare state. It kind of helped with poverty. It established the NHS and the benefit system. According to UNICEF nearly 1 in 5 people lack safe, nutritious foods. They also stated that 4 million children are now living in relative poverty.

You see, I'm trying to help with poverty too.

Every month I go with my family to the supermarket to buy £5 worth of food. We see how many items we can get and then donate them to the local food bank. Our best one yet was 18 items!

For the last 5 years at Christmas I have made up boxes for the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. I do this because I want to give children presents that otherwise wouldn't get any.

To do more, I recently ran for Charity Councillor in the school elections. I made posters and put them up around school. I also gave the longest speech of my year group on why they should vote for me. I won and am now a charity (and fundraising) school councillor. In October, after harvest festival, I helped bring the food donations from school to Lovatt Hall – we gave them to the local food bank.

I want to do more to raise awareness among my fellow students so I am going to explain my feelings in the next school council meeting. I am going to suggest we help raise money for the homeless and other poor communities. We will definitely be supporting Children In Need.

Sources:

www.theguardian.com/society/2017/oct/10/beveridge-five-evils-welfare-state

<https://fullfact.org/economy/poverty-uk-guide-facts-and-figures/>